

Tussle for convert's insurance

By Sharanjit Singh

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GEORGE TOWN: A soldier, who died after converting to Islam, has left his mother fighting a legal battle for the past seven years to claim his insurance payout. This is because Koperasi Angkatan Tentera, which took out the insurance policy, had deposited the RM56,300 payout with Amanah Raya Berhad, a government-owned trustee company.

The co-operative said Rukumony Muthiah, a widow, could not inherit the money because under syariah a non-Muslim cannot inherit the property of a Muslim.

Rukumony, who works as a cleaner, was named as the beneficiary under a trust deed made by her son before his conversion.

Her son, E. Ragu, was a bachelor and had converted to Islam on Dec 31, 1999.

His Muslim name was Mohamed Redzuan Abdullah Ellaippan.

Mohamed Redzuan was a ranger based at the Wardie- burn camp in Setapak. He died on Aug 2, 2000.

Rukumony has engaged lawyer Darshan Singh Khaira and Wong Hon Wai to fight her case.

The Majlis Agama Islam Wilayah Persekutuan, represented by Abdul Muiz Samsuri, had entered into the litigation after applying to intervene in the matter.

Amanah Raya Berhad was represented by Rosmaidar Mustafa.

In his written submissions, Darshan argued that even though Rukumony's son had converted, he could still make a Trust Deed and Assignment in favour of a non-Muslim.

He said this meant that the insurance payout did not form part of Mohamed Redzuan's estate and therefore the religious council had no interest in the money.

He also argued that the syariah principle that a non- Muslim cannot inherit a

Muslim's property was discriminatory and had been modified by the equality clause 8 under the Federal Constitution.

The case was yesterday adjourned to Nov 27 by High Court judge John Lois O'Hara.

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